

General Matthew Bunker Ridgway, USA

(1895–1993)

U. S. and Supreme Allied Commander, Far East
Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

VITA

Born at Fortress Monroe, Virginia. Graduated from the U.S. Military Academy (1917). Served as a company commander, 3^d Infantry (1917–18). Instructor, West Point (1918–24). Attended the Infantry School, Fort Benning, and served with the 15th Infantry, China, and 9th Infantry, Texas (1925–27). Served on the American Electoral Commission, Nicaragua, and the Bolivia-Paraguay Commission of Inquiry and Conciliation (1927–29). Served with the 33^d Infantry, Canal Zone (1931–32), and as technical advisor to the Governor General, Philippines (1932–33). Attended the Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth (1935), and Army War College (1937). Assigned to Second and Fourth Armies (1935–39), and War Plans Division, General Staff (1939–42). Commanded the 82^d Airborne Division (1942–44) and the XVIII Airborne Corps (1944–45). Commanded the Mediterranean Theater of Operations and was Deputy Supreme Allied Commander (1945–46). Served as U.S. representative to

the U.N. Military Staff Committee and the Chairman of Inter-American Defense Board (1946–48), and as Commander in Chief, Caribbean Command (1948–49). Assigned as Deputy Chief of Staff for Administration (1949–50). Commanded Eighth Army, Korea (1950–51). Served as U.S. and Supreme Allied Commander, Far East (1951–52), as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (1952–53), and as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (1953–55). Dealt with postwar demobilization, training the South Korean army, strengthening the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, establishing a NATO line of communications, potential crises in Indochina and on Formosa, and the effects of budget cuts on the Army's capability to carry out its mission. Retired in 1955 and lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he died this past summer.

General Ridgway wrote two books about his military career, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), and *The Korean War: How We Met the Challenges*. . . . (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967).



Courtesy of the U.S. Army Art Collection

Portrait of General Ridgway by Clarence Lamont MacNelly.

THE SOLDIER

... when he had commanded troops, Ridgway had excelled. In this, his true element, he demonstrated a pronounced talent for getting men to pull together and for inculcating unit pride. One reason was that he was no tent hog grinding out orders. He was out front all day, exhorting, cajoling, teaching. He drove himself tirelessly from dawn to dusk and often late into the night. His working motto, delivered in a deep commanding voice tinged with a New York accent, was 'Haven't got time? Well, get up earlier... stay up later at night.' He had little patience with human failings and was notoriously outspoken and short-fused. His dedication, zeal, and intensity led his sweating GIs to joke: 'There's a right way, a wrong way and a Ridgway.' The *Ridgway* was the Army way raised to perfection.

—From *Ridgway's Paratroopers*
by Clay Blair.

Source. *Commanding Generals and Chiefs of Staff, 1775–1991* by William Gardner Bell. Center of Military History Publication 70–14. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992.